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The King's Servants: Men's dress at the accession of Henry VIII. By CAROLINE JOHNSON.

Godalming: Fat Goose Press, 2009. 48 pp., col. illus. throughout. £15. ISBN 978 0 9562674 0 5

This book is by the same team that produced *The Tudor Tailor* and should probably be bought by all who already own that earlier publication. It could be considered as an extension or supplement to the earlier book. The author has pieced together a picture of royal servants, working from warrants and account books in the National Archive, covering the period from 1498 to 1511. A feature it shares with *The Tudor Tailor* is the provision of patterns and guidance on re-creating the clothes of the period. Physically, the book is slimmer and smaller than *The Tudor Tailor*, and in relation to the earlier book, feels compressed into the space available – typefaces are smaller and margins tighter. It is illustrated with photographs of original historical sources, artist's impressions of the clothes described in the warrants, scaled pattern diagrams for the period clothes and photos of how these look when made up and worn.

The historical information, derived from documentary sources, is fascinating and valuable. This occupies the major part of the book. Working from royal accounts and warrants, Caroline Johnson has pieced together a very detailed account of the materials paid for by the Great Wardrobe, to whom they were given, either as gift or as part of their clothing allowance, and the station they occupied at court. We are taken through transcriptions of the documents, and given an account of the clothes worn, from the lowliest serving boy to the staff of the King's Chamber. The Great Wardrobe would sometimes meet the tailoring costs of the garments, where the clothes were part of the servant's allowance; but where the fabric was a gift, the recipient was usually expected to meet the tailoring costs. An account is given of the range of fabrics in use and the colours most commonly worn. Valuable, too, is the fact that the author has been able to give details of the fabric yardages and widths in use for each garment type. It is clear that clothes and fabrics would have revealed instantly a servant's standing at court, not only his official position, but the degree of favour shown to him by the King. The author also calls on

illustration from the visual arts of the period as well as a few surviving garments to give body to these manuscript accounts.

The last quarter of the book is given over to patterns and costume making instructions. When reviewing *The Tudor Tailor* in these pages (Costume 41, 2007), Jenny Tiramani took issue with the lack of source references for the costume patterns. This time, the authors have provided references, although, with a couple of exceptions, these are exclusively from paintings, stained glass and statuary. This section should be treated with caution. The clothes, when made up, conform to the impressions given by the visual sources, but they lack the detail and authority that would be provided by closer scrutiny of original sources (cf. Arnold, Pietsch). As such, they are very useful interpretations for those wishing to make Tudor-styled garments, but they should not be confused with transcriptions of surviving garments.

DAVID WILCOX